

Graduate Program Assessment for NDFS Department

PhD and MS

Fall 2019 – Summer 2020

Mastery of subject material by individual students in the MS and PhD programs is assessed by their supervisory committee following standard procedures required by the graduate school and department. The outcomes data evaluated by the supervisory committees includes plans of study, research proposals, qualifying exams, and theses and dissertations.

In addition, the NDFS Department employs a variety of tools to collect feedback on the overall performance of its graduate programs, including, but not limited to:

PhD and MS in Nutrition and Food Sciences

- Number of students in each degree
- Average time to degree completion
 - 2 years or less for MS degrees
 - 3 years or less for PhD₄₈ degrees
 - 5 years or less for PhD₇₀ degrees
- Average GRE scores of entering students
- Average stipend for MS and PhD assistantships
- Changes to graduate requirements and process stipulated by grad school
- # graduate student authorships per student
- # graduate student presentations per student
- % students completing degrees in targeted time frames
- Alumni and employer surveys

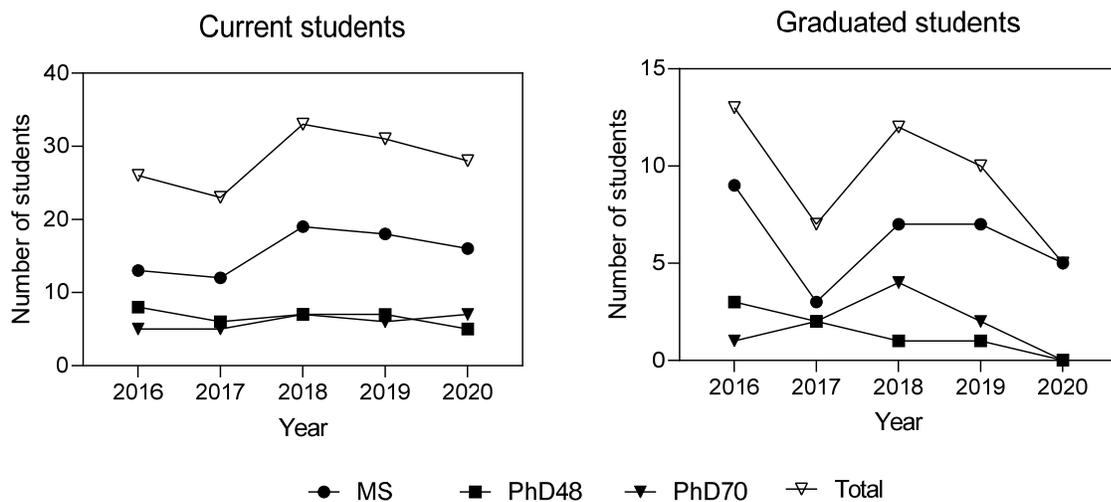
The performance of the PhD and MS program for 2019/20 was evaluated using the categories detailed above. The results are summarized below. Results were collected for the period of August 2019 until July 2020.

PhD and MS in Nutrition and Food Sciences

1. Total number of students: 28
 - a. PhD all: 12
 - i. PhD₄₈: 5
 - ii. PhD₇₀: 7
 - b. MS: 16
2. Number of graduated students: 10
 - a. PhD all: 3
 - i. PhD₄₈: 1
 - ii. PhD₇₀: 2
 - b. MS: 7

3. Time to (in years) degree completion (median values)
 - a. PhD₄₈: 5.0
 - b. PhD₇₀: 3.8
 - c. MS: 2.0
4. % students completing degrees in targeted time frames:
 - a. 3 years or less for PhD₄₈: 0
 - b. 5 years or less for PhD₇₀: 100%
 - c. 2 years or less for MS: 100%
5. GRE scores (median values) of entering students
 - a. Quantitative: 53
 - b. Verbal: 64
6. Yearly stipend (median values) for MS and PhD assistantships
 - a. MS: \$16,834
 - b. PhD: \$13,555
7. Changes to graduate requirements and process stipulated by graduate school
 - a. None
8. Student authorships in peer-reviewed journals:
 - a. 22
9. Student authorship in local, regional, and international conferences:
 - a. 17
10. Students that completed their annual review: 17.4%
11. Alumni and employer surveys
 - a. Data not collected

Figure 1: Five-year trend of current and graduated students enrolled in the MS and PhD graduate degree at NDFS



Discussion

The number of graduate students is on a steady decline since 2018 where the Department had a maximum of 33 students in 2018 compared to 28 students in 2020. Figure 1 shows a 5-year trend in the number of graduate students in the program. The decrease in the number of graduate students is mainly due to a decrease in MS students while the number of PhD students remains approximately constant. The total number of students that graduate every year is also on a steady decline which is a direct consequence of the low number of students in the program. The graduation time for all graduating students was below the target time (2 years for MS students and 5 years for PhD₇₀ students) with the exception for a PhD₄₈ student which graduation time was longer than the expected 3 years. Overall, the number of graduate students is highly dependent on the funding received by Faculty in the Department and the availability to secure research assistantship.

Several years ago, the NDFS Graduate Program implemented an annual student progress report to track students' progress and to help them finish their degree on time. Only 17% of our current graduate students have completed this annual report last year which is lower to the response rate obtained in the previous two years (30% and 23%). The Graduate Program will discuss options to enforce the submission of this annual report.

The outcomes of students currently involved in the NDFS MS and PhD program are 22 papers (mean = 1.3 papers) in peer-reviewed journals and 17 presentations (mean = 1 presentation) in Regional, Local, and International Meetings. The high number of presentations in conferences is likely due to the financial support available from the College to match travel support for student authors.